April 1, 2025
5:30 PM

The City Council of the City of Inverness met on the above date in Regular Session at 212 W. Main Street, with the following members present:

President Davis
Vice President Lizanich
Councilwoman Bega
Councilwoman Hepfer
Councilman Craig
Mayor Plaisted

Also present were City Manager Williams, City Attorney Hartley, Staff Members, and City Clerk Jackson.

The Invocation was given by Councilwoman Hepfer and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by the City Council.

ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to accept the Agenda as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Lizanich. The motion carried.

PRE-SCHEDULED APPEARANCES

4)a) Inverness Fire Department and Red Cross Partnership with Fire Chief Bessler introduced Kris Abel, Red Cross representative and provided details of an upcoming event. It was noted that most people don't realize they only have two minutes to escape a home fire. On average 7 people die in a home fire - every day; 30 people suffer injuries from a home fire every day; and $7 billion in property damage occurs from home fires every year. Inverness Fire Department (IFD) has partnered with the American Red Cross to install smoke alarms free of charge for City residents as part of the Red Cross' Sound the Alarm Save a Life Program. On April 5, 2025, the Inverness Fire Department will be participating with the Red Cross in their Sound the Alarm Save A Life Program at Leeson's Mobile Home Park, where representatives will go door to door, installing smoke alarms for residents free of charge.

PUBLIC HEARINGS / WORKSHOP

5)a) FY 2025-26 Budget Overview Workshop* with City Manager Williams starting with the budget overview presentation explaining the basis the City works with is plan, fund, and execute. Planning would involve State mandates, needs changes, priorities, goals, and objectives. Funding included sustainability in non-ad valorem revenues, fund balances, and grants. Executing by timing, resources available, and meeting goals and objectives.
PLANNING – Fund Balance – General Fund: Unrestricted $5M; Infrastructure $7,677,337; Building $4,000,000; Equipment $1,585,365; Fire $500,000; Land Acquisition $795,395; ICRA $1,234,506; Utility $13,394,290, and Cemetery $1,192,762. Assessing Needs included focus on staffing levels, market analysis/minimum wage, and benefit costs; materials costs, availability, and equipment needs; and Private Public Partnerships (PPP) with contract reviews, assessment of cost benefit, and CPI/cost. Prioritizing with initiatives tied to Council goals and objectives, return on investment, most efficient and cost-effective service delivery while

maintaining essential levels of service and establishing goals and objectives that are attainable and produce desired results.

FUNDING – Revenue Projections noting General Fund Ad Valorem $5,208,257 with 7.66 millage, Non–Ad Valorem $8,614,588 for **Total: $13,822,845;** CRA $1,797,046: and Utility $7,223,156. Funding Considerations and Impacts involved an estimated revenue forecast of an assumed 3% growth in assessed value, exploring new funding sources, State Legislature, CRAs possible sunset, ARPA $1,237,176, projected to be expended in FY 2025; and millage rate of 7.66.

EXECUTING by Functional Area – General Government establish staffing levels to support level of service at competitive rates, project/growth management, lobbying efforts, grants, and cooperative funding, Intergovernmental and Community Partnerships, and policy development and implementation. Economic Development includes Incentive Programs, CRA Plan/Annual Report, infrastructure investment, and Medical Arts District. Transportation spoke to road resurfacing and improvement, multimodal, and infrastructure investment/partnerships. Public Safety & Fire Department with volunteer recruitment and staff development, level of service/ISO rating, and utilization of revenue/grant opportunities. Enhanced Law Enforcement with CCSO agreement, service, and costs and stable level of service under one contract. Cultural Recreation marketing and programming that maintains and creates energy and momentum, continue PPP for events, vendors, and facility operators. It was noted that Whispering Pines Park is not owned by the City, it is a State-owned park. Physical Environment management of parks system, parking and lighting improvements, and shared downtown sanitation. Oak Ridge Cemetery promotion of pre-need sales, landscaping enhancement, and intergovernmental and community partnerships. City Manager Williams announced the CIP Workshop will be May 6 at 5:30pm; Tentative Millage and establishing budget public hearings will be July 15 at 5:30pm; full Budget Workshop on August 5 at 5:30pm, and Budget Adoption hearings on September 2 for the tentative budget adoption and September 16 for final budget adoption. President Davis thanked the City Manager for great leadership and staffing. Mayor Plaisted agreed that the City Manager keeps the Elected Officials well informed. Councilwoman Lizanich questioned the possibility of Whispering Pines Park RV project with City Manager Williams noting the State's current draft budget has no project funding for any Citrus County projects. Councilwoman Hepfer suggested the Federal and State governments should be taught the Plan, Fund Execute process.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING

Debbie Wheatley – Silverwood St. praised the budget overview presentation.

CITY ATTORNEY REPORT

City Attorney Hartley updated a few items regarding various bankruptcies, foreclosures, mortgage company foreclosures with City liens. Spoke of receiving a 627 letter where an attorney has asked for the City's insurance information, although the location of the incident is outside the City limits.

CONSENT AGENDA

a) Bill Listing*
   - Recommendation – Approval

b) Council Minutes* – 03/18/2025
   - Recommendation - Approval

Councilwoman Hepfer motioned to accept the Consent Agenda. Seconded by Councilwoman Bega. The motion carried.

CITY CLERK'S REPORT

None

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

10)a) Small Town Saturday Night with Park & Rec Director Worley spoke of the history and structure regarding the creation of the events starting with the kicked off the initial Small Town Saturday Night in Downtown Inverness on the Square on February 4, 2023. This event is where the community can come downtown and listen to free music and enjoy the downtown businesses. The concerts have been hugely successful, bringing in 5,000 plus patrons into the downtown area for each concert, with the downtown businesses experiencing record sales during these free concerts. The next scheduled Small Town Saturday Night is April 12, 2025. Requesting consensus from the Council to increase the number of Small Town Saturday Night events throughout the year.
City Manager Williams spoke of other downtown events that were not doing as well and have relocated. Councilwoman Hepfer suggested 2 per quarter. Mayor Plaisted suggested every 6 weeks and suggested an exotic car show in the future. Councilwoman Lizanich questioned inviting the Jeep Club. Council consensus requested a cost analysis including an increased number of concerts.

10)b) Hill Street Waterline Remediation* with Public Works Director Pell stating a section of the City's 6-inch water line along Hill Street that has become exposed and in need of immediate remediation. The line serves three fire hydrants and several other residential connections to the City's water system. Pursuant to the City's purchasing policy, the City Manager can authorize emergency repair necessary to protect the City's health and welfare, or to protect it from substantial loss. The City has met with Pospiech Contracting who can start the project immediately for $131,780.00, to replace 1300 LF of the 6-inch water line and the necessary connections to fully remediate the issue. **Councilwoman Bega motioned to approve the proposal from Pospiech Contracting in the amount of $131,780.00 for the immediate remediation of the Hill Street water line as presented. Seconded by Councilwoman Hepfer. The motion carried.**

10)c) Project/Program Updates ***(Verbal)***

- Senate Bill 1242 regarding possible sunset on CRAs. CRAs are critical to the City and there is good support to prevent the ending of CRAs.
- Liberty Park Boardwalk Remediation Project update regarding wooden walkway that was previously removed. State requires a unit management plan as this is part of the State park system. Councilwoman Bega asked why the walkway was removed with City Manager referencing the City lease. President Davis had concerns regarding eroding and possibly adding a railing to block access. Asked for staff to investigate the cost of a management plan with options. City Manager Williams reiterated this is State property.
- Whispering Pines Park Admin Building will be renovated now that CCSO has relocated to the CORE building. The Admin building will become the Park & Rec Department offices.

- Other with City Manager referencing the interesting economic times we are in. Spoke of a letter received from DOGE and the City's response. Spoke of the erosion of Home Rule. There will be a major announcement regarding the City on April 9 at 12:01pm. The Wayfind signage is entering fabrication and will start April/May. Shade structure for Liberty Park playground has been ordered.
- Community Development Director Shoemaker provided an update on the downtown landscaping project which is underway now. Spoke of upcoming tree trimming and that the project will be completed in 90 days.

COUNCIL/MAYOR SUBJECTS

Mayor Plaisted had concerns with the look of the chain-link fencing on 41S around the retention pond. It was noted that area is FDOT right of way. Appreciates the stripes, blinking light, and double yellow line at Zephyr and Ella.

Councilwoman Bega announced April 12 at 8:00am will be Keep Citrus County Beautiful's City Clean Up Day. Everyone is to meet in front of the Valerie Theatre.

Councilwoman Lizanich thanked staff for all they do.

Councilman Craig spoke of recently seeing a playground with the shade sails and how nice it looked.

Council President Davis thanked the audience for attending the meeting and looks forward to a great year. Great Council to work with for doing the best for our Small Town Done Right.

CITIZENS NOT ON AGENDA

Debbie Wheatley – Silverwood St. stated the chain-link fencing would look much better in black.

Meeting adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

_____ _____

City Clerk Council President